

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PFOR

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF JOURNALISTS' CONGRESS IN
HELSINKI

1. THIS MONTH, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ITS 24-YEAR HISTORY, THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF JOURNALISTS (IFJ), HEADQUARTERED IN BRUSSELS, IS SENDING A DELEGATION TO A CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF JOURNALISTS (IOJ). PAUL PARISOT OF FRANCE, FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF THE 80,000-MEMBER IFJ, AND THEO BOGAERTS OF BELGIUM, ITS GENERAL SECRETARY, WILL PARTICIPATE AS OBSERVERS IN THE IOJ CONGRESS IN HELSINKI, SEPT. 21-23.

2. BOGAERTS, WHO HAS BEEN IFJ GENERAL SECRETARY SINCE IT WAS FOUNDED IN 1952, RECALLS THE DAYS WHEN HE WOULD NOT EVEN ANSWER CHRISTMAS CARDS SENT FROM THE IOJ HEADQUARTERS IN PRAGUE. IN 1973, RESPONDING TO THE SPIRIT OF "DETENTE" AND THE PRESSURES OF ITS OWN COMMUNIST-INFLUENCED AFFILIATES IN WESTERN EUROPE, THE IFJ BEGAN A SERIES OF

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CONTACTS WITH THE IOJ.

3. IN HELSINKI, ACCORDING TO BOGAERTS, COOPERATION HAS REACHED THE POINT THAT THE IFJ AFFILIATE IS A MEMBER OF THE CONGRESS' PREPARATORY COMMITTEE. EITHER BOAERTS OR PARISOT WILL MAKE A BRIEF ADDRESS TO THE CONGRESS, BUT THEY WILL NOT JOIN IN ANY JOINT DECLARATIONS.

4. BOGAERTS IS UNDER NO ILLUSTIONS ABOUT THE CHARACTER OF THE IOJ AS AN ARM OF SOVIET POLICY, AND ALSO REALIZES THAT THE IOJ WILL SEEK TO EXPLOIT THE IFJ'S PARTICIPATION TO THE FULLEST. IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE MISSION LABOR ATTACHE, HE WAS CLEARLY UNEASY ABOUT GOING, PARTLY PERHAPS BECUASE HE KNOWS THAT AN IFJ VICE PRESIDENT, CHARLES PERLIK OF THE NEWSPAPER GUILD (U.S. AND CANADA), DISAGREES WITH THE IFJ'S POSTURE TOWARD THE IOJ.

5. PARISOT AND BOGAERTS WILL REPORT ON THE IOJ CONGRESS AT A MID-NOVEMBER IFJ BUREAU MEETING, WHICH PERLIK IS SCHEDULED TO ATTEND. HINTON

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